

From: "Adams, Ben C." <badams@bakerdonelson.com>  
To: "John Cowart" <jw.cowart@woodsonbozeman.com>  
CC: "William L. Gibbons (wgibbons)" <wgibbons@memphis.edu>  
Date: 3/21/2018 6:09:31 PM  
Subject: Re: Crime Commission follow-up

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Wow! Thx so much. Really appreciate it. See you Friday.

Ben C. Adams, Jr.  
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On Mar 21, 2018, at 4:20 PM, John Cowart <[jw.cowart@woodsonbozeman.com](mailto:jw.cowart@woodsonbozeman.com)> wrote:

Alright! You're a good salesman. I just sent you \$2500.

John W. Cowart  
President

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From: Adams, Ben C. [<mailto:badams@bakerdonelson.com>]  
Sent: Wednesday, March 21, 2018 3:40 PM  
To: John Cowart <[jw.cowart@woodsonbozeman.com](mailto:jw.cowart@woodsonbozeman.com)>  
Cc: Adams, Ben C. <[badams@bakerdonelson.com](mailto:badams@bakerdonelson.com)>; Bill Gibbons ([wgibbons@memphis.edu](mailto:wgibbons@memphis.edu))  
<[wgibbons@memphis.edu](mailto:wgibbons@memphis.edu)>  
Subject: Crime Commission follow-up

Eli, I hate to bug you but I want one chance to make my case and then I will leave you alone. You should have received a letter from me and Bill Gibbons asking for your financial support. You are probably frustrated about our rising crime and don't feel the desire to support us. While I am very frustrated as well, I want to explain why I strongly believe you should. Violent crime is one of our community's most urgent challenges that affects so many other areas. Reducing crime is multifaceted and involves many stakeholders, some of which do not naturally play well together. The Crime Commission is the only body that has all of the stakeholders at the table plus members of the business, faith and social service areas to work with the stakeholders in devising strategies to reduce crime and have accountability for their implementation.

You might ask why has crime gone up so much since 2011. We launched our first 5 year plan of Operation: Safe Community in 2006. With increases in sworn officers each year and pro-active Blue Crush policing plus other strategies, violent crime went down each year through 2011. Unfortunately then the pattern reversed. There are a number of causes, some foreseeable and some not. In an effort to reduce the budget, Mayor Wharton cut out 2 classes in a row of recruiting so the pipeline dried up for a while. Then, the well needed decision to reduce pension and OPEB expenses created huge morale issues with MPD and we had unusual attrition for a while as a result. Similarly, the Ferguson and related events created a backlash toward law enforcement which also hurt morale and turnover. Our sworn complement gradually rose to 2500 in 2011 and then has shrunk to 1900 at the beginning of Strickland's administration. Last, it is unclear how much the prior administration or prior MPD leadership bought into pro-active policing. You should also know that major property crime has gone down dramatically since 2006 and only went up last year for the first time. We believe much of that involves car thefts or car break ins to get guns since the laws allowing guns in cars has been liberalized. We must develop new strategies to address that because this is a new phenomenon.

So what has happened lately and why do we need your support. We are completely aligned with Mayor Strickland and Director Rallings. The Mayor has supported ramped up and modern recruiting efforts, renewed use of PSTs to handle minor accidents and retention bonuses funded by the business community via the Crime Commission in the amount of 6 million dollars. The sworn officer complement has gone over 2000 for the first time in several years and we have a 3 year plan to build it to at least 2300 officers plus 100 PSTs. The business community has funded consultants to advise MPD on best practices in reducing gang violence and another study in process to evaluate staffing efficiencies. The problem is urgent and is the Mayor's top priority. we are not asking you to fund any of these initiatives. They are funded. However, we have really beefed up the leadership and personnel of the Crime Commission with the hiring of Bill Gibbons as our President. We have a great partnership with U of M creating the Public Safety Institute which he also chairs. We have Harold Collins working hard on community engagement, Linda Russell on communications and development and a top staff at the U of M monitoring statistically all of our efforts and reporting regularly. To fund this, we need more support from the private sector. A few major corporations fund the bulk of our roughly 1M budget. We need to broaden our effort. you have supported us in the past. can you commit to \$1000 or \$2000 to help us address these urgent challenges. I have attached a brand new Annual Report about our activities and participants which will be published soon. Thanks for your consideration. Bill or I would also be happy to come visit with you to discuss further at your convenience.

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